

(TMI Focus, Vol. XXIV, No. 4, Fall 2002)

A TIME FOR GRATITUDE

by Laurie A. Monroe

As this year comes to an end, I find that I am grateful for all that I have experienced. I have learned a great deal from the many relationships that have been and are a part of my journey here, and the most important lesson is that of love. I can have compassion for one who has been negative to me personally, I can have understanding of the fairness that is needed on many different levels, and I can love those who are simply being who they are in this physical journey. I have found that love, compassion, and our precious memories remain with us as we leave this physical plane. This was demonstrated to me during the dying process of my dear friend Jim Greene. It was a gift to be with him and support him with love during his transition. His memory will live on forever in the hearts of those who knew and loved him.

I am most grateful for The Monroe Institute's new collaborative relationship with the Institute of Noetic Sciences. As a strategic partner, we will begin to offer the GATEWAY VOYAGE at their retreat center in Petaluma, California. The first VOYAGE will be held November 30 through December 6, 2002, and three are scheduled for 2003. IONS's vision is "a global wisdom society in which consciousness, spirituality and love are at the center of life." Their mission: "by 2010, create transformative lifelong learning programs essential for living in the 21st century, grounded in rigorous research on extended human capacities." The term noetic is from the Greek word meaning intuitive knowing. To quote Willis Harman, president of IONS from 1978 to 1997, "The goal is creation of a similar body of knowledge, empirically based and publicly validated, about the realm of subjective experience. For the first time in history we are beginning to create a growing, progressively funded body of established experience about humanity's inner life—and particularly about the perennial wisdom of the great religious traditions and Gnostic groups. For the first time there is hope that this knowledge can become—not a secret lost in dogmatization and institutionalization, or degenerating into manifold varieties of cultism and occultism—but rather the living heritage of all humankind."

The synergy between our organizations will enable many members and participants to explore further their own inner world as we move toward a wisdom society. Whatever we become, however we change, knowledge and wisdom will lead us to our higher purpose and goals. The GATEWAY VOYAGE offers the tools to enable us to remember and recognize our own capacities to understand and truly know our spiritual natures in relation to the world. I encourage you to become a member of IONS, but first explore their Web site at <http://www.noetic.org> and get to know them.

World events have made this year difficult for all of us in many ways. If we can remember that earth is a learning school and that all we experience is a part of the plan, we can understand

more clearly the meaning of our pain and the emotion behind it. If we truly understand that we are more than our physical bodies and that this physical life span is a blip in the larger scheme of things, perhaps we can process our grief more effectively by translating the emotion to a much higher and greater vibration. Those of us who have lost loved ones know that their love is as firmly melded into us as our love is melded into them. Death is only a physical separation—no more.

As this year comes to an end, take time to reflect on all that has happened in your life to date. Find at least three people, events, or situations that you are grateful for in this moment and express your gratitude. Let someone know how you feel. Part of our homework in earth school is to share our thoughts and experiences with others so they too may learn something from our sharing. Our life experiences are similar yet unique. Whatever the experience, if we share it with someone, the wave of energy begins and it has no ending—it is continuous, just as we are.

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